



NEWS RELEASE

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**SEATTLE MAN PLEADS GUILTY IN FEDERAL COURT
TO DRUG AND FIREARMS CHARGES**

Anchorage, Alaska – United States Attorney Nelson P. Cohen announced today, August 21, 2007, that Nicholas Blackwell, a resident of Seattle, Washington, pleaded guilty in federal court to charges of conspiracy to distribute controlled substances and possession of firearms in furtherance of drug trafficking.

Blackwell, age 22, pleaded guilty to conspiracy to distribute controlled substances and possession of firearms in furtherance of drug-trafficking before United States District Court Judge Timothy M. Burgess. The drugs involved in the conspiracy included both ecstasy and cocaine. Sinoun Moth, Lamar Facine, Chase Walters, and Jeffrey Sanders are also named as defendants in the indictment.

In connection with the guilty plea, Special Assistant United States Attorney Erin White advised the court that Blackwell was the leader of the organization in its various locations. From both inside and outside of Alaska, Blackwell directed other members of the conspiracy to distribute controlled substances. In December of 2006, Blackwell mailed a parcel to Anchorage from Seattle. The parcel contained approximately 2.5 kilograms of cocaine and 700 ecstasy pills. Co-defendant Sanders provided an address for the delivery of this parcel, which was intercepted by government agents. During the course of this conspiracy, Blackwell acquired and carried several firearms, including an assault rifle, which he used for personal protection from other drug traffickers and to protect the drugs and profits derived from their distribution. The indictment charges all five defendants involved in this conspiracy with conspiracy to distribute both ecstasy and cocaine.

Judge Burgess scheduled sentencing for November 9, 2007, at 10:00 a.m. Pursuant to a plea agreement, Blackwell will be sentenced to serve seventeen and a-half years in prison. Blackwell continues to remain in custody pending sentencing.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation Safe Streets Task Force, comprised of Anchorage police officers and FBI agents, conducted the investigation leading to the indictment in this case. SAUSA White is one of two prosecutors in the U.S. Attorney's Office who are funded by the Municipality of Anchorage for the purpose of prosecuting gang-related and violent crimes cases.

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